

Table 2-3.

Percent of farms and land in farms: by economic sales class,
United States, 1997-98¹

<i>Economic class (gross value of sales)</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>				<i>Average size of farms (acres)</i>	
	<i>Farms</i>		<i>Land</i>		<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>
	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>		
\$1,000 - \$2,499	27.4	27.6	4.4	4.3	70	68
\$2,500 - \$4,999	14.6	14.7	4.4	4.4	132	130
\$5,000 - \$9,999	12.4	12.1	5.4	5.5	190	198
\$10,000 - \$19,999	9.9	9.9	5.8	5.8	256	255
\$20,000 - \$39,999	9.0	8.9	7.4	7.3	359	357
\$40,000 - \$99,999	10.6	10.5	17.0	16.8	700	696
\$100,000 - \$249,999	9	8.9	24.0	23.5	1,164	1,149
\$250,000 - \$499,999	4.1	4.3	14.2	14.8	1,512	1,498
\$500,000 +	3.0	3.1	17.4	17.6	2,531	2,471
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	436	435

¹A farm is any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or normally would be sold during the year. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service

■ Legal Structure of U.S. Farms (Individual, Partnership, Corporation)

Type of organization refers to the farm's form of business organization. Farms may broadly be classified as individual operations (proprietorships), partnerships, or corporations (family and nonfamily). Agricultural Resource Management Study data indicate that individual operations are the most common type of farm organization. Nine out of ten farms in the 1997 survey were classified as individual operations. Partnerships and corporations make up a very small share of farms. About 85 percent of farm corporations are family corporations, with more than 50 percent of the stock held by people related by blood or marriage. Individual operations account for the largest share of farmland (75 percent) and gross farm sales (60 percent). Corporate farms have the highest average farm sales. The average value of gross farm sales by corporate farms in 1997 was \$724,867, while partnerships averaged \$243,464. Gross sales for individual operations averaged \$53,518, less than one-quarter of the corporate level. Average acreage was also higher for corporate farms (2,024 acres) and for partnerships (1,006 acres) than for individual operations (373 acres).